MONTEREY NEWS

MAY 1997
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THE TOWN

The Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting will be held Saturday, May 3 at 9 a.m. at the Fire Station.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

At the April 25 "Mini" Town Meeting, hottest of the issues was how Monterey votes on the already moot question of school representation for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. A moot point, because of the clear disagreement by the towns involved, and the need for a unanimous vote for anything to go forward.

Voters will be asked to consider two articles pertaining to Monterey's representation on the Committee .

The importance of the town's vote is that it may influence an eventual court decision. Sheffield's lawsuit against the district and the towns has been stopped in order for the towns to vote on a compromise, in hopes of avoiding expensive litigation.

ARTICLE 30 contains the Alford Plan, which would compromise the one person/one vote plan supported by Sheffield by ensuring that each town is guaranteed a certain number of seats regardless of the outcome. This plan seeks to increase the size of Sheffield's representation while preventing the possibility of one town holding a majority vote on the committee.

ARTICLE 30 is difficult to understand because of necessary (legalese) wordiness and repetitiveness under number 2. THE COMMITTEE, (b) Elections. Points 1-9 provide for the school district committee member elections to convert to being held at the time of state biennial elections, beginning the cycle of change in 1998 and concluding the conversion in 2000 with the town having the most committee members, Sheffield. The remainder of ARTICLES 30 and 31 are straightforward and not difficult to understand if the reader has followed the controversy.

LAURA GACCIONE

Sheffield has already voted in favor of ARTICLE 31, weighted voting.

A SALARY COMMITTEE was formed as directed by the 1995 Annual Town Meeting to be responsible for recommending the salaries and wages for each position in the Town to make Monterey's pay scale comparable to that of similar towns. A committee was subsequently appointed, comprised of the following members: Jim Bracken, Jane Kessler, Walter Parks, and Barbara Tryon. Their review showed Monterey below the mean pay scale and those findings are reflected in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The Finance Committee and Select Board are in agreement on the three year schedule of salary and wage increases which are the result of the Salary Committee study.

FULL-TIME POLICE PROTECTION is being proposed to deal with the invasion of vandalism that Police Chief Bachaus feels is increasing in Monterey and other small towns by the larger police presence in surrounding, larger communities.

QUARTERLY TAX BILLING will eliminate the necessity of borrowing and paying interest to meet unforseen Town expenses, according to Select Board Chair Gige O'Connell.

BY-LAW CHANGES were open for discussion at a Public Hearing, held April 7: There was no discussion about correcting Article X, Section 4 on Mandatory Recycling by providing for an Enforcement Officer; several raised questions about the impact on property owners should there be the establishment of an Historic District in the Town's center; there was no discussion about a provision allowing the denial, suspension or revocation of licenses or permits for anyone who owes municipal taxes or charges as this provision has been removed from this year's Warrant and will appear on a subsequent one.

County Government Questioned.

On April 4 the Monterey Democratic Committee hosted a discussion, moderated by Monterey attorney Charles Ferris, about the role of county govern-

ment. Representing county views were Commissioners Abraham Kasparian (Hampden Co.), William "Smitty" Pagnatelli, Robert Melle (both of Berkshire Co.), and representing the state were State Senator Andrea Nucifero and State Representative Chris Hodgkins. Governor Weld seeks to abolish county government this summer with bills introduced by state lawmakers.

The meeting concluded, with county and state representatives apparently agreeing, that there is a real need for regional services and that there is also need for the restructuring of county government which has been in place as it stands today since colonial times. County government is accused of being redundant, bureaucratic, and costly. Weld says about half of the state's 14 counties have deficit problems. Berkshire County, however, does not and maintains a balanced budget.

A recent Berkshire County Task Force survey showed that county government provides some real needs, especially for the smaller towns. Among those receiving the most approval are surveyor service, emergency communication (911), Clean Rivers and Lakes programs, health and retirement benefits, Registries of Deeds, and County Court Houses. The bigger towns have their own communication centers for emergency service. The smaller towns have this service only because it was put under the County Sheriff's Department. Because the larger towns now have their own surveyors, the smaller towns are all dependent on one surveyor while before there had been three.

Monterery Select Board Chair Gige O'Connell serves on the Berkshire County Advisory Board, which approves the County budget. She explained to the Monterey News that because of weighted voting on the Board, the larger towns can control the county budget, and hence county services. She views the county as essential to maintaining important services for Monterey.

The Task Force has 14 questions for state legislators to answer if the state takes over county government. A few are as follows: How will programs not taken over by the Commonwealth survive on a County/Regional level if the state takes all of the County assets and funding sources? How will County property be disposed of in a State takeover? Will the Commonwealth end assessments to cities and towns for the former county services assumed by the State? How will County property be disposed of in a State takeover? If the Commonwealth assumes the forty-four million dollars in assets from the Berkshire County Retirement Fund, will the State assume the liabilities of the Berkshire County Retirement System? How will County historical records be stored, and what entity will be responsible for the preservation of these documents?

The April 4 meeting audience expressed the fears that rural counties such as Berkshire will be sending dollars to Boston which they will never receive their fair share of in return and that larger towns with more voting power will overlook the regional services the small towns need.

Sexual Harassment Compliance. Monterey is now in compliance with state law requiring a sexual harassment policy for all Town employees, elected officials included. Copies will be distributed to all employees and committee members through their chairpeople. Employees will be asked to sign and return an Acknowledgement that they have read and understand the policy. The policy includes procedure for reporting such an instance with definitions clearly stated and penalties explained.

Miscellany. On March 24, the Board unanimously voted that a "snow and sand emergency" be declared, allowing the Town to make expenditures in the Snow and Sand Account, which had been depleted.

Neuma Agins of the Buggy Whip Factory appeared before the Board on April 7 with a petition signed by 11 persons requesting a directional sign at the intersection of Routes 23 and 57 to their businesses and business interests in the areas served by the previously existing sign, destroyed by the 1995 tornatio. The Buggy Whip Factory and the Inn on the Green had previously been denied such a request by the Select Board on the grounds that such signs diminish the rural atmosphere of the area.

On the same evening the Board met with Chief Gareth Backhaus to discuss trading-in the police cruiser for a newer model. Also April 7 the Board unanimously appointed Walter Potash of Great Barrington as the Town's new building inspector.

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LOCAL STUDENTS SHINE IN *WEST SIDE STORY*

George Norian, child advocate and arts enthusiast, had his hands full during the month of April, as some of his favorite young people performed in two different high school productions.

He saw Shaylan Burkhart and Katie Kopetchny of Gould Farm perform leading roles in *West Side Story* at Mt. Everett High School. "Shaylan's Tony is the mediator between the Sharks and the Jets," says George. "When he raises his voice to promote peace and understanding, it's done in an angelic and peaceful way... It shows you that two people from completely different cultures can get together - and it works."

"When Shaylan and Christa Henderson (Maria) sang, it was so beautiful, it brought tears to my eyes."

Shaylan has distinguished himself at Mt. Everett not only academically, but in the band and chorus as well. He played the role of Ferdinand in Shakespeare and Company's high school collaboration of *The Tempest* at Berkshire Community College last year, as well as Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Shaylan is contemplating the theater as a career, but is concerned that it's "not very practical." "It's fun to get over your fear of being in front of people. It's really satisfying to see the end product - seeing all the people do their part and have fun." Shaylan will be going to Brazil as an exchange student next year.

Norian did not mince words in his appreciation of Gould Farm's Katie Kopetchny. "Katie has such an electrifying presence. She has complete command of the stage. When she comes on, she ignites. She has the part of Anita mastered."

Katie is also academically distinguished and belongs to the band and chorus. George says she is "awesome" in soccer and softball, even though the Mt. Everett record is not exceptional. Katie will be studying performing arts at Johnson State College in Vermont next year.

George Norian is a retired community member at Gould Farm whose interest in children and the arts is legendary. He has helped a number of students finance their educations and has simply "adopted" others as part of his extended family. "I remember when Shaylan was eight or nine - I took him to Tanglewood, and after that to see the road company of Cats. I remember my father taking me to the St. James Theater on Broadway for *Oklahoma* like it was yesterday."

George was on his way to see other friends in the Monument Mountain Regional High School production of *Annie* - for the third time - when I spoke with him.

Two hundred senior citizens were invited for a sneak preview of *Annie*. The technical crew included Eoin Higgins of Monterey (see accompanying article). "To me," says Norian,"These are the kids the *Record* and the *Eagle* should be writing about."

Laura Gaccione

LAURA GACCIONE

Shaylan Burkhart, Katie Kopetchny and George Norian

WORKING ON *ANNIE*

Working on the musical Annie was an interesting experience, although I joined the actual production in the week of the performance. The actors were not teenagers, it seemed, but true professionals who had a clear idea of how to put on a show which received many compliments from audience members old and young.

This demonstrates the appeal of a musical like Annie. Set in the era when many grandparents grew up, it also has that enduring childlike sensibility which reaches the orphan in us all. Perhaps it is the idea of a child who has the strength of character to overcome being left at the mercy of the world by her parents (the guiding force of a child's life) and win in a world stricken with poverty and decadence, that makes this musical such an endearing saga of American life. Because, to be honest, the actual content is pretty weak.

What truly makes this musical work when performed is not the story, not the songs, but its life and colorful energy, which, simply by the strength of the young actors of Monument, had the ability to transpot the audience into the 1930's.

Senior Rachel Geyer said good-bye to her high school acting career with a stunning portrayal of Annie, Maria McMahon with a cruel and devilish Miss Hannigan, and Robyn Cross (a four year musical techie) pulled the whole show together. The rest of the cast was a mix of underclassmen who provided the necessary verve and energy needed to make this performance what it was : a happy-go-lucky masterpiece.

Eoin Higgins

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BIRTHDAY UPDATE

In Spring a young person's fancy turns to the SESQUICENTENNIAL, Monterey's blow out bash of a Birthday Party, August 1st, 2nd, 3rd. The planning committee has moved its focus from the big picture of the celebration to the details of implementing the event.

The gazebo, which will be the focal point for a number of events during the celebration, has been ordered. The gazebo will initially be located near the Firehouse. After the celebration the gazebo will be moved to another location in Town to be used for various community functions.

The big banner announcing the celebration has been ordered. The banner will wave across route 23 between the General Store and the Tea Room. It will serve as a constant reminder of the celebration and will be unveiled on Memorial Day Weekend.

The souvenirs have been ordered and will go on sale Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. The souvenirs include three different adult shirts, two of which will have the Celebration logo embroidered in six colors, awesome, as will the cap. There will also be youth tee shirts, mugs and plates with the logo printed on them. We expect a great crowd, reminiscent of a Filene's Basement sale, clamoring desperately to be the first on their road to have an embroidered sesquicentennial hat and shirt.

We also want to officially warn grandparents to start saving up your pennies. Think of all the shirts, caps etc. that you will need to buy for the kids spread around the country!

Ticket applications are being mailed out for the Big Semi-Formal Swing Band Dance on Saturday night in the Firehouse. Requests for tickets will be processed on a first come first served basis. We expect tremendous pressure for tickets as space will be limited, so be advised and get your orders in promptly.

The dance committee has made plans for a semi-formal entrance way, in front of the firehouse, so that revelers in nice shoes, will not have to hike across country from their cars. The planning committee has also dealt with a number of less exciting details, including the daily clean-up of the Town during the celebration. The members of the committee can start to see the celebration coming together and are getting very excited.

A special treat are the plans for the closing ceremonies on Sunday Aug. 3rd. Although, it is hard to keep a secret in a small Town, we are keeping the plans under raps for now, but they promise to be memorable. The June issue of the Monterey News will include a full schedule of the events for the August party so that you can make your summer plans.

The Memorial Day Parade kicks off the summer celebration. Over the July 4th Weekend the new Veterans Memorial will be dedicated. A fund raising letter has gone out, and we hope the community comes out in full force, to raise the necessary money. If you did not get a letter please contact Dean Amidon at 528-1223 for details.

Join us, volunteer to help out, and let's all have a wonderful time, a great fancy.

Ian Ross Jenkins

MONTEREY ARTS AT THE 150TH

As part of the upcoming Sesquicentennial Celebration, a committee has been organized to prepare an exhibit of Arts and Crafts by our local artists and artisans. The exhibition will be held in the Tryon Tea Room on Saturday and Sunday, August 2nd and 3rd. It will include drawings, prints, paintings and craft objects. The committee is especially interested in works that have a specific relations hip to Monterey and the surrounding Berkshire area. If you are interested in exhibiting your work, please contact any member of the committee to obtain an application. The committee must receive the completed application form by June 15.

Arts and Crafts Committee: Frank D'Amato 528-3723 Lois Ryder 528-2548 Pauline Nault 528-5994

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MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

May 26, 1997 is fast approaching: Memorial Day is our town's 150th year. Now is the time to mark those calendars so as not to miss this special day of community commemoration and celebration. The parade, with a theme of Past, Present, and Future, will begin at 2 p.m. at the Sandisfield Rd. intersection, and will proceed through the town center to its final destination at the firehouse.

Here are just a few of the things you might expect to see. Though President Clinton's plans are still somewhat tenuous, officials from Tyringham (of which Monterey was a part prior to 1847) have definitely agreed to join us, and Tim and Grace Burke will assume a place of honor. Our traditional Memorial Day ceremony - the laying wreaths, the flag-raising, the playing TAPS and our National Anthem, the time for reflection and remembrance - will all take place.

There will be floats and oxen and a solar car, horses and greyhounds and firetrucks old and new, children in uniform or carrying banners. And there will be friends and neighbors in historic costumes, a singing minstrel, a fife and drum corps from Connecticut and the Mt. Everett High School Marching Band. And so much more! Oh - we must mention the invigorating and irrepressible Berkshire Bateria with their energizing mix of drummers and dancers and musicians - they are not to be missed!

The Berkshire Bateria de Sambadees will mark that special place for all to become participants in the parade as it makes its way to the firehouse. Don't be left behind! Post-parade plans include that menu of hot dogs and cold drinks for everyone, some very special 150th Anniversary kickoff events, and some great music with David Grover and The Mountain Laurel Band!

Again, mark those calendars now - Monday, May 26, 2 p.m. It's Memorial Day, the town's 150th birthday. Let's remember our past and rejoice in our future!

Stehanie Grotz

THE BIDWELL HOUSE

May always marks the beginning of the season for The Bidwell House. This year we have once again expanded our schedule of events to offer more exciting programs to the community. May will prove to be a very busy monthOur first pre-season program will be the OWL PROWL Friday evening, May 9, from 9 - 10:30 p.m. naturalist Tom Weldon will teach you about the habitats of the kind of owls found in this area and demonstrate their unique calls. He will then lead you to various areas on the museum property so you can see first hand what these habitats are like and then call the owls. Often these curious birds will come close and answer the calls so you can hear them. This event will begin at the porch of the museum. Please wear appropriate clothing for an evening walk in the woods, bring a flashlight, and, if it is warm, bring bug repellant. This event is free to all.

The Bidwell House will open for tours on Saturday, May 24 (Memorial Day Weekend). The museum will be open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 - 4 p.m. until October 15. Admission is $5 for adults, $4 for students and seniors, and $1 for children.

Sunday, May 25 is the Second Annual Great Berkshire Bean Planting Day. Come and learn about heirloom vegetables and historic planting methods; gather herbs on a wild herb walk and talk; children's activities will include old-fashioned bean shelling and planting. This event will be held from 1-4 p.m., is free to all and is co-sponsored by the Eastern Native Seed Conservancy.

The museum is in great need of volunteers for this summer season. Meet new people and help out the museum by gardening, help with special events and office work. It's a wonderful way to spend a summer day. For more information, please call me at 528-6888. Hope to see you at the museum this summer.

Anita Carroll-Weldon

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Tom O'Brien (Trustee)	269-7471
Judy Hayes (Worship)	528-1874

With a prayer request or to join the Prayer Chain:

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THAT WHICH ENDURES

The Monterey Meeting House Campaign has focused our attention on the physical needs of the building. They are serious and will require a lot of money. The Capital Campaign Committee is quite hopeful that the "needs" and the "money" will match.

However, Kathy Page Wasiuk's and Delight Dodyk's recent articles have narrated, wonderfully, that the life of the building has been and remains not in stone and wood but in the people. If there is a word that describes the Monterey Meeting House it might be "paradox". A dictionary definition is: "A seeming contradiction that may nonetheless be true." (American Heritage Dictionary)

The building is outsized for the number of people who "inhabit" it. I think that maybe the physical size of the structure is a way of calling the passerby's attention to an easily overlooked truth: power and influence are derived from smallness. Kathleen Norris has written in her book: Dakota: A Spiritual Geography, about a small church called Hope in western South Dakota. She quotes a former pastor: "Hope was where I realized how much the members of a rural church actually work as well as worship together. They live supporting each other." [Emphasis is mine.] (p. 165)

I have thought about that a lot the past months; for myself as well as for the small group of people who, week after week, climb the precipitous stairs out front and seat themselves on the threadbare cushions. Small in number, meeting in an outsized building, therein lies a paradox. It is the loving support for each other from which power and influence emanates and permeates the larger community.

As Norris writes: "I wonder if a church like Hope (and, I might add, Monterey) doesn't teach the world ....not by loudly voicing its views but by existing quietly in its own place." (p. 167) Our society rewards the outlandish, the vociferous, the raucous. (The recent media hype surrounding the TV sitcom actress Ellen DeGeneres' "coming out" is a perfect example. So who cares!)

It is one of the sad ironies of our time that as our lives are being glutted with information about how to live successfully, we are having more and more difficulty knowing how to relate to, how to love one another.

Clearly, information and knowledge are not the same. It is both my personal and pastoral experience that what people want and need is not simply more information, but loving and compassionate relationships. What is wanted, hungered after, is the actual experience one-on-one and in community. Yet what we are exposed to are bureaucracies and bureaucrats who define meaningful life and relationships with money. Indeed, power and influence are defined by money and possessions. Quite simply, the name of the game today is greed and control.

It is within this context that I see the paradoxical nature of that small band of people trekking to the Monterey Meeting House each Sunday morning. Because we truly care for and love one another, we bring life to the wood, stones, and mortar of the Meeting House. The casual passerby, the summer visitor, the year round resident might not "see" that spirit. But I would wager that if we did not inhabit the building, it wouldn't be long before people would notice a certain impoverishment in the life and spirit of the community.

Will we survive? Who knows. Kathleen Norris writes about the survival of the Hope church, and it certainly describes us who worship at the Monterey Meeting House. "When people ask, 'Who will replace us?' the answer is, 'who knows, maybe no one,' and it's not easy to live with that truth. The temptation is to deny it or to look for scapegoats. The challenge is to go on living graciously and thankfully, cultivating love. Not sentimental love but true charity, which, as Flannery O'Connor said, ' is hard and endures.' " (p. 174)

Keith Snow, Pastor

COMMUNITY GARDEN?

Do you have too much shade, rock or slope to garden atyour home? Would you like to have an area to work in a Community Garden at the Edith Wilson property? Would you like to be involved in getting this idea started? If there is enough interest, we'll pursue the idea.

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SCHOOL NEWS

New Marlborough on the NET. April 5 was the culmination of months of work for Mt. Everett students enrolled in the TEK2000 program, the NMC staff and many other individuals and organizations. On this, Massachusetts NetDay, NMC went on line.

At the inaugural ceremony, Representative Chris Hodgkins stated that the Southern Berkshire Regional School District is only one of four school districts in the Commonwealth to use this technology and the only district in Berkshire County to make use of funds from a State Technology Literacy Grant. Superintendent Tom Consolati reassured the audience that the basics were not being dismissed in favor of technology. In fact, reading, writing and math are essential to using today's technology.

As a result of all this, our children at NMC and Monterey schools will not only have interschool access - be able to communicate between schools through a computer network - but internet access as well.

The TEK2000 students and volunteers donated approximately 200 hours of service to this project. They designed and then pulled one mile of wire and cable throughout the school, built and configured a computer file server for NMC and built or upgraded over 50 computers for use on the 5 campuses, saving taxpayers over $15,000.

Many people are not aware that TEK2000 is a student-run enterprise, part of the High Technology Entrepreneurship class at Mt. Everett. One of their stated goals is to provide computer hardware and software to students, faculty and members of the community. If you would like more information or a catalog, the number to call is 229-0309.

The information superhighway is now open to our children. Can't wait to see them go. Deborah Mielke

The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

CORRECTION:

Due to an acute case of CDD - Caption Deficit Disorder - the names of photographers were (mostly) ommitted last month. Page one was by Laura Gaccione, p. 12 (the squirrel) was Eleanor Kimberly, p. 17 (church meeting) was by Ray Ward. Eleanor Kimberly also suffered the amputation of one of the limbs of her fine poem, *To a Song Sparrow*, which will be reprint this month on page 12.

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TORNADO, REVISITED

This May marks the second anniversary of the tornado that hit Monterey on Memorial Day, May 29, 1995, at approximately 7 p.m. Moving east from Egremont through Great Barrington, it took the lives of two students and one adult at the Egleton School, which borders Monterey in Great Barrington on Rt. 23. The death toll was low when viewed against the force of the tornado, the huge amounts of forest that went down in its wake, and the amount of property damage done.

Witnesses said it lasted less than a minute.

Monterey men and women worked tirelessly, clearing thirty foot high piles of downed 100-year-old trees, searching for those who may have become trapped and injured, and cleaning up the damage to private property and public roads. Eight through roads were completely blocked by fallen trees, poles and wires, and telephone and electric service were cut off for days. Over sixty properties reported damage. The town's bill came to $189,579, most of which was reimbursed by federal funds. Individual Montereyans kicked in almost $30,000 to help out.

Two years later, the cleanup continues. Downed timber is still being cleared and burned.

The property of Will Marsh and Glynis Oliver on River Road has changed. Their garage was lifted off the land and tossed into the nearby Konkapot River. Felled trees destroyed their garden shed and other garage, and they sustained roof damage on their home. (see photos.)

They were uninjured. Amazingly, there were no serious injuries in Monterey. River Road remains closed to this day.

Fondly remembered areas of woodland have disappeared, some replaced by new vistas. The entrance to the Appalachian trail on Rt. 23 at the Great Barrington line, not far from where the fatalities occurred, has a few measly branches instead of lush green timbers that once provided quiet and camoflauge. There were many other properties affected, at least one business ruined, and compelling stories of near misses.

The following is the story of a Monterey second-home owner who tried to remain calm as she and her husband drove from Monterey into Great Barrington that day two years ago in May.

GLYNIS OLIVER

Before: White garage at right stands behind the main house (out of view).

GLYNIS OLIVER

After: Garage is gone (center of photo). Garden shed is crushed by trees.

GLYNIS OLIVER

20 months later: Larger, new garage is set against the backdrop of the devastated hillside.

WHAT HAPPENED?

As "newcomers" to the peaceful community in which we finally built our long dreamed about vacation home, my husband Ted and I are always reluctant to leave Monterey. And so it was no different Memorial Day, 1995. If leaving early meant little more than psyching ourselves for return to work and the "mean streets" of Manhattan on Tuesday morning, why the rush?

And so, we cavalierly ignored Public Radio's frequent storm warnings throughout the day for Dutchess County, knowing full well our route home - The Taconic Parkway - could possibly be affected.

We deferred our departure to 6:45 p.m. With a last minute glance in the entrance to our driveway at Shawn Morse's wonderfully designed hand carved sign that read "The Villa" in bold gold lettering, we were on our way. "Blondie," Ted's cocker spaniel, sat contentedly behind her master in the driver's seat, while "Woo," (my son's cat from his fraternity house at U. of Colorado and deposited with me upon Jonathan's graduation) commenced her protest against her imprisonment in her carrying case. She meowed incessantly, as if in anticipation of the odyssey that lay ahead.

All was ominously still as we made our way along Hupi Road, turning left at Tyringham over Lake Garfield, and right at the Church of Christ. The setting sun still shone brightly on the "General Store" as we proceeded west on Rt. 23, our usual route to Great Barrington. I sat back in the comfortable upholstery of our reliable Honda Accord and began flipping through the different sections of my as yet unopened *N.Y. Sunday Times*. I caught a last minute glimpse of my favorite points of interest, the grazing cows opposite the Gould Farm sign, the llamas beyond that, the lovely white Greek Revival farm house on the left, and further down, the Hayloft Gallery. As usual, I thought Leonard Weber ought to change its name to his own, so all who pass will know this is the home of the charming townscapes watercolors he does so well.

We had just gone past the intersection of 23 and 57, and the Eagleton School, when I began to notice the darkened sky in the distance and I uttered my first timid rhetorical "Gee, maybe we should turn back, " to which my Sweetheart automatically responded assuringly, "It's nothing, it's just a summer shower." I automatically accepted. We continued on past Butternut Basin, and Panda West, and waited for the light at 23 and 7 . The sky ahead of us was becoming increasingly darker (sort of army fatigue green) when I switched from rhetoric to request. "Please dear, lets go back," to which he again responded, "It's nothing, it's nothing, just a summer shower."

I remained silent, though my adrenalin pumped rapidly as we drove past the business district of retail shops and offices, past Impoco's Video, The Market Place, over the bridge on the Housatonic River and was about to make a left in front of the topiary "G.B." (next to Domaney's Liquor on Main Street) when a deafening explosion racked the area knocking out all the electrical systems that governed traffic on Main Street. A torrential downpour enveloped us. It was 7:00 p.m.

Ted continued determinedly down Main Street under signals that no longer functioned. I, believing quite strongly we were defying every basic tenet for survival alternated hysterically between demanding and begging.

I hadn't yet resorted to threat or tears - but in my best shrew-pitched-shrill I screamed "Let's go back to Monterey!" Like some obstinate Mr. Magoo with disaster all about him, the stubborn stranger next to me in command of our vehicle ignored the chaos that was gradually engulfing us. He made a right turn opposite Searles Castle to head to Egremont, following a caravan of bumper to bumper cars going over the railroad tracks. (Their signal, by the way, was flashing red with danger) Then they, like some carefully choreographed car ballet, each executed the first in a series of 3 point turns.

And then we saw them.

Massive maple & pine trees, curiously frightening in their unfamiliar horizontal position, straddled Rt. 23 in front of the nursing home. Downed electrical wires floating above us with their transformers dangling only slightly above the roofs of our cars pushed me closer to the edge...

Ted did his 3-point turn, still insisting "It's nothing, It's nothing," and headed back to Main Street, intent on turning right, heading south on 7, through Sheffield and the scenic antique shop route we sometime take. I, by now a "basket case" noticed that we were surrounded by floating debris from Wards Nursery, and started to consider divorce proceedings from the alien seated next to me.

LAURA GACCIONE

The Monterey border, on Rt. 23 at the entrance to the Appalachian trail - yards from where the fatalities occurred.

Once again we were stunned with the reality of a repeat of the previous scenario - enormous downed trees, wires, transformers, but by now, people had emerged from the shelters, arms stretched toward the sky in disbelief at the devastation that had struck the landscapes in an instant. The image, as those seen daily from some disaster somewhere in the world on nightly T.V. news and to which we've grown unconscionably indifferent, had the effort of making me feel as though I was a bit player in some made for T.V. docudroms !

I had dropped the begging to return to Monterey, and made outright death threats, when the "enemy" swiftly completed his latest 3-point turn, his silence this time confirming surrender and acknowledgment that, indeed, something dreadful had happened.

Ted headed north on darkened Main Street and then east on 23 to attempt to return to Monterey but discovered we were blocked again as we approached the intersection of 23 and 57. We made our last U turn out of there, hearts pounding as we viewed the familiar mammoth trees straddling the roadway with electrical wires floating in the debris and transformers swaying frightenly close to the roof of our car.

I ran into the Panda West where the patrons noisily enjoyed their dinner oblivious to the chaos that awaited their departure. The equally unaware manager permitted me to report what we had seen to the Great Barrington Police and attempted to call my son Daniel who, having spent the holiday with us, chose to depart from Monterey even later than we.

By now the telephone service was out and we gambled that heading north to Stockbridge, east to Lee, and south on Tyringham Road would get us home. Holding my breath for the final portion we returned to "The Villa" - grateful it had been spared any damage.

Several weeks passed before we witnessed the heartbreaking devastation to which Monterey was subjected. When we pass the Eagleton School now and the small structure memorializing the 3 people that died within a few moments of the time we drove through the very same spot, we wonder what our fate might have been, had Ted succumbed to my initial pleas to return home.

Dorothy Silverstein

LAURA GACCIONE

Before: Stately pines on the Appalachian Trail

LAURA GACCIONE

After

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MMMMMONTEREY: A CELEBRATION IN SLOGANS

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MmmmMaureen Meier

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This is a partial list of those who have contributed to The News.

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Harriet Phillips
Rose Foreman
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To a Song Sparrow

Welcome, little sparrow
In your coat of brown
Your song so sweet and lively
Earns you a "shining crown"...
You trill it in the sunshine
And in the morning rain;
Thrice welcome little songster
The spring is here again.

Eleanor Kimberly

INNER TORNADO

The sky went dark from my perch at the top of the hill. I hadn't been in the Berkshires long enough to read these things, so I didn't panic about my possessions or my neighbors. I was also still on a morphine drip, making the changing landscape nothing more than a motion picture scene through the hospital window. My concerns were with my interior landscape.

Surgery for cancer at Fairview Hospital had just been completed. I was in a nether world, waiting for my bodily functions to start working again. Tubes issued forth from virtually all sides and parts of me.

They had succeeded in getting all the cancer. The question was whether I would survive the effects of surgery.

The storm came and went. It hardly phased me in my altered state.

My employer, who had had a brush with cancer, told me to pay attention. Why had I moved to the Berkshires? Had I instinctively come here to heal.

Cancer is deeper than medicine can go. That's why, up till recently, it was almost always fatal. Most people have carcinogens floating around that are beat off by a healthy immune system. Cancer makes its lethal move when the harmonious balance of life has been disrupted, worn thin by heredity, age or too many years of unhappiness.

It seemed fitting that the land I lived on was being altered by an act of God in the same way that I was. I knew I had to be open to this invasion into my life if I was to ride it out. I couldn't just fight it; I had to learn from it. I realized that I had somehow gotten lost, psychically, and I was being given the opportunity, by virtue of uninterrupted time for reflection and healing, to find my own way home.

I didn't want to see the outer devastation. I was in a foreign country, hearing about a disaster that was happening far away. I didn't care that we were on national TV. I didn't watch television. I felt my own personal housecleaning was all I could deal with at the moment.

I wrote in a journal, had prayers said for me, had healers of every type praying and laying hands on me. I told "god" I was willing to give up what was killing me.

I had a second surgery. I still wasn't right. I kept on my inner journey, being open to the contents of my mind, some of which were flopping around in my head like tossed salad. Connections were made and issues resolved. There were understandings of things. Deep understandings.

A few nights later, I was awake and musing. I suddenly felt engulfed in a great wave of healing, like some cosmic catcher's mitt was collecting me to put me back in the game. A benevolent wind. The next day I was well enough to eat - the first time in three weeks.

I was released soon after that. I cringed as I passed some of my favorite spots on Rt. 23 and saw the wreckage. I wasn't well enough to walk around. I was lucky to find that my home was untouched.

It was all around me, but I was fine, and my neighbors had been lucky. I continued to be well.

Some feel that natural disasters are nature's way of righting an energetic imbalance: cleansing on some ecological level. We simply don't know the scope of the power of nature, and why she does what she does.

Small comfort for the relatives of those who died, and others who are - still - dealing with property losses and damages.

Yet, if I've learned anything, it's that there's learning in everything - even in the midst of chaos. That learning, for me, is the eye of the storm.

LAURA GACCIONE

EMBARRASSED IN MY GARDEN

Today I went up the hill to the toolshed to get some more seedling flats and trays. This time of year it's a mess in there and it isn't all my fault-- mice and other winter residents knock things off the shelves and I have to watch my step to avoid breaking something or stumbling over some unseen hand weeder lying on the floor, claws up. I was looking things over in there, thinking vaguely about a trip to the dump, or more shelves, or both, when a glance at the shovel reminded me that I had harvesting to do. I'd noticed the parsnips leafing out a little the other day and made one of those mental notes, the kind you feel lucky to ever see again and when you do you know you'd better jump right on it.

Over at the '96 parsnip bed I got right to work, sliding the blade in not too close, clearing around the big tapering trunk of a major Harris Model Parsnip. I turned up a few worms. I stopped to listen to a certain robin I've been hearing in the top of a big poplar. He sounds so thrush-like I'd been wondering if he weren't a woodthrush after all, but yesterday I got a good look at him and he is just a virtuoso, maverick, jazzy kind of robin.

I got two big parsnips and washed them off in the wading pool. This green plastic item has been in place ever since the kids were little and the pool was a way to keep them happy so I could garden a little longer at a stretch before having to tend to them, back in the days of diapers and naps. It's amazing the same old K-Mart pool has hung in there all these years. In the summer frogs come out of a big clump of chives nearby and climb in. We wash all our vegetables there before taking them to the house for more washing, and the garden mud in the bottom of the pool was glinting in the sun today as I made the bits of mica swirl in my parsnip-induced currents.

Moments like this I stop to be thankful. It's like remembering to make a birthday wish-- sometimes (this is true of me, anyway) we forget. We get in a hurry to blow out those candles and after they are all out someone says, "Did you remember to make a wish?" and of course you say, "Uh, yeah..." and quickly you tack one on.

Today I remembered to be thankful, but it was tinged with guilt! In the toolshed, looking at those timeless hand tools so slim and spare, I felt I had a nasty secret I couldn't tell them. Digging the parsnips, replacing the dirt I'd moved, carefully covering the worms so they wouldn't get too cold tonight or get gobbled up right away by the thrushy robin, I felt like telling them: "Don't thank me! You don't know what a monster I really I am. You don't know about the phone call I made this morning, the wheels I have set in motion, the betrayal."

Headed for my garden: the Industrial Age

Like anyone who ever placed a seed order with certain mailing list-bartering firms, I am swamped with advertising for rototillers. For twenty years I have burned or recycled those glossy red photos, loyal to my slim, quiet shovel. I have sliced a few worms with that graceful blade, it's true. But I have always offered up a gardener's remorse, an apology, a quick sharp moment of prayer that this worm may not feel pain. Now, with the new tool I have ordered on credit, I will not even know about the many worms I chop. I won't hear the hoarse chuckles of this robin or his flutey phrases-- my new red rototiller will be snarling away, saving my back and my time.

Why, you demand , did I order the fool thing? I have never used a rototiller in my life, but I have lusted after one. Right there in the holy place of my worms and parsnips, quiet except for the wind in the poplars and the distant exclamations of hens having laid, I have actually dreamed of a snorting, air-polluting, worm-chopping ally. I have fantasized about going around the garden edges, particularly, beating back the witch-grass and then maybe reclaiming the strawberry bed. I have imagined walking upright behind my little red monster while this work gets done and then bedding it down in the toolshed, right there next to the shovel and the garden fork.

What will they say to each other? Won't their auras clash or something? Can we all work together on this garden? And most of all, will I have what it takes to send the thing back if I don't like it? The glossy info says I can do this, and so did the woman on the phone. They say I can keep it a whole year if I want and then send it back if I miss my boy-robin, my worm prayers, and my aching back. I can return to the old ways, they assure me, with a weird smile. I watched their video and looked closely at the faces of Mr. So-and-so and Mrs. Somebody as they told the camera how much they loved their little snarler. I noticed these people's hair: it was untouched by the kind of breezes we've had here all day. Their clothes were spotless, as if maybe they'd come right over from the laundry detergent advertising studio to do the rototillers. Next they were going to do toupees or hairspray. "I just love my (rototiller, hair-piece, laundry soap). It really gets the job done. I don't know how I managed without it."

I am not knocking cleanliness (got that pool for washing parsnips, remember?), but I am freaked out that when I made the call this morning I was letting the bodysnatchers in. They're coming. I'm going to be up there plodding along with my machine and my perfect hair and it's not going to be me any more. Then it's going to be up to the shovel and the pool and the worms to jump up and save me. They're going to have one year to get it together, to stop me before my candles are all blown out and say, "Hey! Don't forget to make a wish!"

Bonner J. McAllester

WILDLIFE SURVEY

From the Roads. It is not surprising, since the automobile is so much a part of our lives, that a majority of our wildlife sightings are made as we course about, swiftly visiting every part of town and the neighboring regions, where roads have penetrated. Now buds are fawn-colored and dusky red in the treetops even in the high places, while down in the Housatonic bottom red maples are frankly in bloom.

Animals Seen from Cars: A moose near Algerie Rd. in East Otis (Dale Duryea, early April); a beautiful, big black bear crossing Rt. 23 just east of Keyes Corner (Beverley Kimberley, April 10); three deer just west of Keyes Corner (Eleanor Kimberley, March 30); over 100 snow geese and as many Canada geese in adjacent fields north of Monterey Road and West of the main Tyringham Road (J oe Baker, March 24); two herons on their nests off Smith Hill Road (David and Beryl McAllester, March 24); two pairs of loons on the river in Housatonic (Dale, April 10). Ironically, the same roads and cars have led to the demise of several small mammals in this same period: a skunk, two muskrats, a raccoon, a gray squirrel, all seen on Rt. 23.

Wildlife in the Blizzard of April 1. The combination of warm open weather followed by 20 inches of snow brought a towhee to the McAllester feeder at Dowd Corner where he sometimes sat for a half-hour at a time. This "very large sparrow" is dramatic with his black head, white breast and chestnut sides and is usually only seen in dense woods lustily scratching in the leaves on the ground. A more drastic visitor was a bear who came to the Shapiro/Dean feeder on Hupi Road in the night of Apr. 2-3 and destroyed it entirely. Every part was knocked down, crunched up and emptied. Dale Duryea says to take warning: this is the time when the bears are coming out of hibernation, big, strong, and hungry, and most likely to be attracted to feeders, or any other available food.

Birds: spring arrivals. Eleanor Kimberley reports a *song sparrow*, Apr. 1, *a phoebe*, Apr. 5, 2 *chickadees* moving into a bird box usu ally claimed by tree swallows, Apr. 8. Dick Tryon saw a *bluebird* at the Scheffeys' on Wellman Rd., Mar. 18, and two *killdeer* at Lowl and Farm since Mar. 14. Joe Baker on Hupi Rd. saw a *woodcock*, Mar. 28 and a *chipping sparrow* on April 4. Mary Brock saw *meadowlarks* and *killdeer* also, when she went over to view the snowgeese, Mar. 24. David McAllester saw *tree swallows* in late March and a bluebir d on a low branch over his driveway, Mar. 30.

The Snowgeese. Dale saw well over 100 of them, flying over Lake Garfield in the first week of April. It might have been the same flock seen earlier in Tyringham. They are smaller than Canada Geese and white on back and wings. In flight their call is a high pitche d gabbling compared to the bugling of Canada geese. They are on their way back from wintering in Virginia and North Carolina and spe nd the summer on Hudson's Bay and Labrador. Our First Wildflower. On Mar. 27, Sudi Baker spotted several coltsfoot blossoms in the gravel near Kirillov Brook at the east end of Monterey. Also called clayweed, for its damp habitat, and coughwort, since the leaves were used for a cough medicine, this dandeli on-like flower grows right at the edge of snowbanks on the first warm days in early spring. The leaves come up later, roughly hearts haped and as much as four inches across.

Other Signs of Spring. If bluebirds and tree swallows are here, they see insects in the air before we do. I have seen some small mo ths, "snow fleas" (also reported by Mary Brock on Mt. Hunger Rd.), and a mourning cloak butterfly.

David P. McAllester

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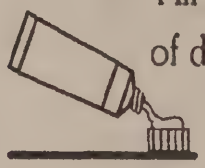

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THE CHURCH: A MEMOIR

Along with Delight Dodyk, Kathy Wasiuk has chronicled the history of the church for the News. Here is a personal account of her "coming-up" in the church.

"I started spending my summers in Monterey in 1947. My grandparents bought a little house on the north side of Garfield in the thirties, and proceeded to expand it in every direction - up, down, and sideways - to accommodate their own family and myriad guests. They chose Monterey to escape the doldrums of the New Jersey summer, and because longtime friends from Oberlin College, where my grandfather had taught, had built along the road they entitled "Elephant Rock" after a piece of glacial humor at the head of the road.

They were Protestant Midwesterners born and bred, and Victorians, whose sense of order in the world depended on the unfolding o f patterns and rituals in properly prescribed ways. My grandmother, for example, did not leave the house without a hat. Gloves were worn if one was going in to town - meaning Great Barrington. Dinner was at 7 p.m., and one did not appear at the table wearing the same outfit in which one had spent the day mucking about. The ladies all went to the Wednesday matinee at Stockbridge, the men played golf, everyone played bridge, and everyone we knew went to church on Sunday, as regular as the day of the week.

And so, particular care was taken in dressing after Sunday breakfast. My grandmother had a variety of hats, all with netting a cross the front, which she wore in rotation through the month. My grandfather wore red ties - red was his favorite color, and he had a substantial collection built by many birthday and Christmas presents. I was given a quarter for the collection plate, always handed over with strict instructions not to lose it and to be sure to put it in the plate. My grandfather piloted the Buick down to the village, leaving us off at the foot of the front church steps while he went off to find a place to park.

I remember helping my grandmother and then Aunt Mabel Brown up the steep stairs to the front door, where we were greeted by someone standing in the vestibule. I would hang around, waiting for my friends to show up with their families, until my grandmother shooed us into the sanctuary.

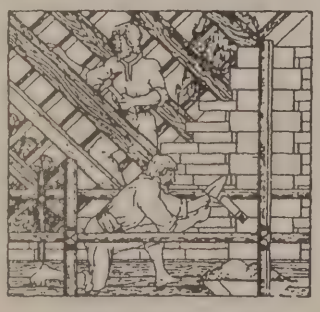
It is a high ceilinged room, and was often cooler than outside, as it had been closed up all week. It is quite spare, without decoration or ornament, which left only the view out the windows for visual amusement, and as I was small, that meant looking up to the sky: perhaps God was up there, looking down on us? It was enough to quell my squirming.

There were books to fiddle with - hymnals and Bibles - and interesting brackets with round holes designed for inserting fingers. I was given crayons and paper and spent the time coloring pictures of whatever floated into my head. Eventually, I grew tall enough to see over the back of the pew in front of us, and I became aware of other things in the room. There was, for instance, a display of some pewter tableware in a little cabin et inserted in the front wall. There were flowers - usually wildflowers, but occasionally something grand, like gladiola from someone's garden. There were the other people: women in pastel or flowered dresses, other children who twisted and squirmed and stuck out their tongues - just a little - when we could manage eye contact, men in white shirt collars against deeply tanned and creased necks.

Mrs. Peet, a women who seemed to me a person of considerable sophistication, always wore beautiful beads that matched her earrings. There was the organ, and, inseparably, Mrs. Miner, the organist: a small woman with white hair wound in a knot held by heavy tortoise shell hair pins, who wore two hearing aids that on occasion squealed piercingly during the service. She played the organ with great gusto and panache, regardless of occasional wrong keys.

Up front, there were people in robes: one, a man in black, who talked, and a group in white who sat together up on a little platform on the left. It didn't take long to figure out that they were the high point, and always had one specialty number when the rest of us did not sing and all eyes were on them.

As a teenager, when Bob Daggett was pastor, I joined the choir during several summers, as did my friends. We'd troop over to M rs. Miner's parlor on Thursday afternoons to rehearse what I knew by then was called the anthem. By that time there were very few adults in



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MERRIMAC SMOKED FISH

the choir. In fact, there was only one: Mrs. Miner's brother, Newman Abercrombie, who also served as the town librarian.

Newman was a tall, rail thin, somewhat cadaverous specimen, and I believe he had two functions in the choir: to keep us kids in line and to count the house. He would, during the middle of the service, make a tally of the attendance, and write it down in a little notebook. I have no idea what he did with the information.

Of course, sitting in the choir gave me a whole new vantage point. I now looked out at the congregation, instead of being in the midst of it. This also meant that I was quite visible to my grandmother, who monitored my behavior from her seat. My friends, who sat with me, were no help in keeping me out of trouble. Often, I would give my quarter to one of the boys, as he had pockets and it was difficult for me to manage all the sheet music, the hymnal, and the quarter. Just as often, he would tease me by refusing to give it back to me, in spite of my silent but escalating demands for it, until just before the collection plate arrived under my nose. Sometimes that earned both a poke from Newman and a glare from my grandmother.

There were other, special occasions held upstairs, and in the social room downstairs. Upstairs, Richard Dyer Bennett gave concerts, as did Carleton L'Hommedieu, famed organist of the Mount Hermon School. There were dramatic presentations, imaginatively staged without a curtain, and an occasional string quartet or pianist. The fact that it was a sanctuary on Sunday, a place reserved for examination of conscience and development of spiritual life, did not impede the music and laughter and applause for other occasions. The line between the spiritual and the cultural seemed nonexistent; two sides of the coin of higher expectations.

Downstairs was called (rather grandly) the Social Room, where community suppers were - and still are - a regular event and were usually accompanied a program of someone's slides or a talk by a traveler. Men set out long tables and folding chairs. Women organized easily and immediately in the tiny kitchen, pulling out the wildly unmatched china, setting places with stiff paper napkins , and popping pans in and out of the oven. Home made baked beans, quivering jello molds, rich noodle casseroles with an occasional piece of chicken, tossed salad with fluorescent orange French dressing were the offering... urns of coffee and cake of several varieties appeared: staples of inexpensive, made-for-a-crowd, middle American 1950's cooking. The food was unvaried, nourishing, always needed a little salt, and I loved it.

The women set the dishes to soak while we attended the program, hearing the speaker and then discussing what could be done about the refugees, the less fortunate, those in need of some small help Monterey could give, and then women washed up the dishes, in thoughtful quiet, and men went outside to smoke.

Of course, eventually I began to listen to the lessons learned upstairs and down, and hear how they demanded that I be involved in the world. Ray Ward talked about respect and kindness to neighbors, a word he gave the broadest possible definition. Bob Daggett spoke one Sunday about his self-examination of his automatic reaction to a mentally retarded man who had happened to sit next to him in Friendly's, and a light went on about considering my own attitudes toward others.

Virgil Brallier worked to organize ecumenical services with rabbis and priests and pastors from across the county, and I began to learn about being Jewish, being Catholic, about the validity and cherishing of other traditions. Keith Snow, now, reminds me of the value of the time to nourish my spiritual life.

Some of them preached from the pulpit. Most of them talked from the floor. The lessons were easily heard, sometimes difficult to live, but universal in their applicability and they are where community is truly lodged. For me, "upstairs, downstairs" carries a resonance of considered thinking and a committed life - both meeting in the same house.

Kathy Wasiuk

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-- *Matthew Breuer, a Roadside regular*

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Friday

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PERSONAL NOTES

Hats off to Jen Brown who is an extra in the new film *Romy and Michelle's High School Reunion*, just released on April 18. Look for her especially in the reunion scene. The daughter of Maryellen Brown of Hupi Rd., Jen is presently living in West Hollywood and loving life in California. We will be looking for you Jenny B. - it will be great to see you.

Our best wishes for a speedy recovery to Peter Vallianos who recently underwent emergency surgery. Luckily, as Evelyn points out, it was between the ski and softball seasons. In all seriousness, our thoughts are with you, Peter, and we're glad to hear that things get just a little bit better each day.

And, we would like to pass on a wonderful message from Bob and Eileen Schlichter, sending reetings to all their Monterey friends. The Schlichters spent some 40 summers on Lake Garfield, and are "very appreciative of the time we had up there starting in 1956." They are no longer able to make the trip, and are now residing full time at 530 S.W. 18th St., Boynten Beach, FL 33426. May is a big month for them with birthdays and the celebration of their 61st wedding anniversary!

Very Happy Birthday wishes this month to Cora Jay Baker on May 3, to Douglas Brown on May 6, to Eoin Higgins on May 8, to Tarsi Dunlop on May 9, to Eileen Schlichter on May 11, to Isaiah Schulze and Tess Dunlop on May 22, to Chris Goldfinger on May 26 (also Parade Day), to Alexandra Newman on May 29, and to Bob Schlichter on May 31.

And Happy Anniversary to Ernie and Mary Heath on May 3, to Bill and Jeanne Zad on May 7, to Alf and Lena Pedersen on May 22, and to Bob and Eileen Schlichter on May 30.

It's great to hear from you. Please send notes, birthday greetings, etc. to me on or before the 15th of each month. Or just give me a call at 528-4519. Thanks.

Stephanie Grotz

COMPOST BINS ARE A'COMING

As I hope you read in last months News, Monterey was the recipient of a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) consisting of 30 composting bins.

The grant entitles us to thirty bins: twenty 24 cu. ft. capacity and and ten 30 cu. ft. capacity. The bins retail at $58 and $60 - we will sell them for $20 and $22 respectively. This includes a 5% sales tax, which the DEP is hoping will soon be eliminated. There will be a bin on view at the Warrant Informational Meeting at the Firehouse on April 25th and also at the annual Town Meeting on May 3rd. When the bins arrive CET (the Center for Ecological Technology) will give a demo for those interested at the transfer station.

The grant requires that the town set up a special "gift account" which is to be used for the purchase of additional bins when needed. This means that when you acquire a bin you make the check out to the Town of Monterey, with a note specifying that this is a gift to be used to further the town's composting bin distribution program through the purchase of additional bins. Sounds cumbersome, but we didn't have time to get an article on the warrant, and this is the way that DEP suggests we handle the bin account. We should be able to work up a form letter for you to sign, to make life easier .So far we have five people who have called us and are on the list. First come first serve seems the fairest way, so if you're interested call me (528-0550) or our coordinator, Larry Lampman (528-5922). When our thirty are gone we will reorder more from the monies in the "gift account." It is possible that the next batch of bins may have to sell for somewhat more than this batch.

These are "The Brave New Composter" type of bins and are made out of 100% recycled Massachusetts plastic. I have had mine for around 6 years now and although it looks somewhat disheveled (like it has been making glorious compost for all that time, as indeed it has been) it is as good as new.

God willing, they should be arriving sometime this month. Joyce Scheffey

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REP RAP

The advent of spring marked the beginning of budget season at the State House. With over 900 amendments filed and debated for inclusion in the budget, some legislators use this an an opportunity to get more "pork" back to their communities; I saw the budget debate as an appropriate avenue to ensure that residents of the Berkshires get their fair share of state services and funds. I write to you today to declare victory on that front.

On the Friday before the debate, while writing budget amendments, I was struck with the announcement that the Department of Employment and Training was closing the walk-in service for unemployment claims in Berkshire County. This represents just another attempt by the state to move regional state services out of reach for Berkshire County taxpayers. The regional offices must be maintained because Berkshire residents pay for these services and utilize the offices. Simply, we need them like any other region in the Commonwealth, and now we are one giant step closer to making it a law.

I submitted an amendment to the House budget that would protect Berkshire County residents from bearing the brunt of government downsizing trends. This item is known as the Berkshire Fair Share amendment. The idea behind the amendment is given our geographic barriers, Berkshire County must have local access to state services. Traveling 30 miles or more for services from the Berkshires is a major hardship. The fact is that it is a major hardship anywhere and I do not know of any other region in Massachusetts where their residents must do this. Boston needs to realize that we will not stand to be Forgotten County. The Governor can not balance the state budget by penalizing the taxpayers of Berkshire County.

Through Berkshire Fair Share, the Berkshire County offices of the Department of Transitional Assistance, Department of Social Services, Department of Employment and Training, Department of Youth Services, Department of Mental Retardation, Mass Highway, Elder Services and the Department of Revenue would be retained with no danger of closing or relocation. This amendment was modeled as a follow-up to my successful bid to retain Mass Highway's Regional Office in Lenox when the Governor proposed to relocate that office to Northampton.

The Berkshire Fair Share amendment was adoped under my leadership with the support of the entire Berkshire legislative delegation. No one in Berkshire County will have to drive to Springfield for state services. Those services will always be available in Berkshire County as they should be, because we deserve equal access to equal levels of state services. It's just getting our fair share and I am proud to have won this battle for Berkshire County.

Representative Chris Hodgkins

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ENJOYING THE BENEFITS OF TAURUS

(April 21 - May 20)

A few decades ago -- just an instant according to the sensibilities of folks born under the the zodiac sign Taurus, who often have a deep and abiding reverence for history and antique -- Julie Andrews played Queen Guinevere on Broadway. One of the now familiar songs she sang let the audience know "It's May, it's May, the lusty month of May..." Andrews conveyed the double meaning of the word lust enthusiastically, her voice and facial expression communicating clearly Guinivere's delight in the burgeoning of spring, both in the world and in her body.

Most of May is the season of Taurus on the astrological calendar. As the song suggests, along with respecting the past, Taureans also tend toward lustiness. Not necessarily lusty as we currently use the word to imply an unhealthy hunger, but lusty in the older sense of the word, meaning one who has an appreciation for the gifts of the body and of the earth.

This gift of gratitude for the physical which is seen in Taurus often includes a love of gardening. Many Taureans work the earth, either as a primary occupation or as a hobby. The appreciation of the physical world can also be expressed in a talent for massage therapy, pottery or banking.

Many Taureans seem to have both a talent for philanthropy, and the resources to indulge in gift giving.

Taurus has both lessons to teach and lessons to learn, as do all the signs of the zodiac. As a teacher, Taureans offer the rest of us lessons in patience. These lessons come either through the example of the Taurean, whose patience can be a force of nature like Mount Fuji. Or, the lessons in patience can be given in a back-handed way, by Taureans who have yet to outgrow their talent for digging in all four heels and stubbornly sticking to a particular attitude, opinion or frame of mind. The old cliche, "My mind is made up. Don't confuse me with facts," may have been coined with a Taurean in mind.

Flexibility, then, the ability to change with grace and ease when change is ap-

propriate, is a primary life-lesson for Taureans. Considering that there are times when loyalty to the past might be a detriment rather than a virtue can be a shock to these folks, but is a skill to be developed. Then the gifts of stability and generosity can actually deliver what the Taurean hopes to offer: gifts which provisions for a good life shared with family and friends. During the season of Taurus, meditate on the words of the 23rd psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd, I have everything I need. He makes me to lie down in green pastures, he lead me beside the still waters. He restores my soul..."

MaryKate Jordan

THE THREE R'S

The Center for Ecological Technology offers free workshops: "Think Before You Toss: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," throughout the county. It developed the workshop in response to the many questions it recieves about how we currently manage trash, and what we can do with it.

Massachusetts residents generate approximately 3 to 5 pounds of trash per day. Changing purchase, use and disposal habits can have a significant impact on our health, environment and pocket-book.

Times are Tuesday, May 6 7-8 p.m. at the Nature Conservancy in Sheffield and Thursday, May 22 from 6:30 - 7:30 at the Lee Public Library on Main Street. Call Joy Kirschenbaum at CET at 445-4556 for more information.

SENATOR SAYS

It would not be Massachusetts if the weather were bland in April. I was here in the district with you (not stranded in Boston, thank fully) when the April Fool's Day Storm hit. I extend my sympathy to those of you who went without heat or suffered damage to your homes. I also offer thanks and congratulations to the local highway departments, fire fighters, police officers, utility crews and others who put in the extra time to take care of community needs during the crisis.

One Size Does Not Fit All Small Town Roads - The Massachusetts Highway Department has distributed revised design guidelines which re cognize for the first time that "Low Speed/Low Volume Roads" should not be built to the same widths as higher-traffic roads in the Commonwealth. This is especially good news for the western part of the State where roadways with low running speeds and low traffic volumes are more prevalent.

Engineers and psychologists know that wider roads often lead drivers to increase speeds. In the past, some local officials have felt trapped between the need for state assistance in paying for costly improvements on a given roadway, and the certainty that state funds would be accompanied by "upgraded" engineering standards and widening which could change the character of rural roadways.

The new standards will allow MassHighway more flexibility to work with individual communities on solutions which are more sensitive to local needs. Credit for these revised regulations is due in part to the many local highway superintendents, such as Jack Cable of Heath. These local officials have maintained a constructive dialogue with MassHighway over the years and have proven to state officials the kinds of roadways that work for their towns.

Local Highway Money Preserved - The legislature recently debated and passed An Act Establishing the Metropolitan Highway System. The passage of this legislation, which I supported, is significant for western Massachusetts because it creates a separate revenue so urce for road projects inside Route 128, including the depression of the central artery in Boston (known as "The Big Dig") and maint enance costs for the three harbor crossings.

Without this financing plan in place, money originally designated for road constructionin our area could have been diverted to those extraordinarily expensive projects in the City of Boston. Grant Program Created - We were also able to fund the "Local Public Works and Tourism" grant program through the Metropolitan High way legislation. Eighteen towns in the "Turnpike Corridor" in this district were eligible for this grant competition which will supp ort local projects relating to transportation and tourism.

It is not always easy to be a neighbor of the Turnpike, but it makes thin gs a little easier when the Towns can look forward to an occasional reward like these grants. For a lot of the small towns in this area, tourism and economic development are one and the same.

I am pleased that this vote enabled us to protect funds for local road, bridge and transportation projects in our region of the state, and to support some economic development projects at the same time.

Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.

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From that deepest place in our hearts beyond all words, tears, or even thoughts, we thank you for the loving and supportive ways that you have reached out to us in the loss of Christopher. We are nourished by the strength and goodness of this community. How much harder it would be were we not among people with whom we can safely share such great sorrow. Christopher's life is a gift to us: and in the words of May Sarton, "What has been given once so interwoven cannot be raveled nor the gift ungiven. "
Wayne, Donna and Shaylan Burkhart

TIDE POOL

Such delicate creatures
shelter here.
They could care less
whether they swim in a pool
or the vast ocean
The pool cradles them
'till the tide comes in
and sends them out
again.

Christopher Burkhart
5th Grade, 1986

GOULD FARM SINGS OUT

Our 5th Annual Spring Concert

One of the best-kept secrets in Monterey is Gould Farm's twice-a-year choral concert. "Choral Concert" is slightly misleading since at any of our concerts you are likely to hear fiddle, accordion, electric bass, harmonica, conga drum, flute, recorder, as well as an array of voices. The choice of music is also eclectic. We sing or play anything that comes our way if enough of us like it, including Gregorian chants, South Afrian folksongs, rock and roll, 30s standards, contemporary folksongs, popular music. It all depends on who is here.

Gould Farm attracts staff and guests from all over the world. They come with a wide array of talents and musical backrounds, and they bring their own musical tastes with them. Some are near-professional, others have been told sometime around fifth grade that they couldn't sing. (They're wrong, of course.) From this disparate crowd of individuals, somehow, a chorus emerges, one that is even brave enough to sing and play in front of an audience. Beginners realize that they can learn to sing after all; experienced musicians have a chance to try out interesting and challenging material. A week before the concert we are still feverishly re-writing harmony lines or trying to schedule one more sectional rehearsal.

After the concert it all seems worth it. Time after time I have seen the glow of pride on the faces of staff and guests who have surprised themselves by their accomplishments. Our hours of rehearsal together -- sometimes tedious, sometimes beautiful -- always contain laughter ... who would want it otherwise? In the process we have bonded, become a group. These songs and our experience together will be ours for the rest of our lives.

Some members of the greater Monterey community have attended these concerts for years. A few have even joined the group! We would be pleased to have more Monterey residents come. Admission is free and refreshments are served. The concert is on Friday, May 16, at 7:30. Call 528-1804 for directions or other information. Hope to see you there!

Oren Rosenthal

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROGRAM CALENDAR EVENTS

May 7 - Parenting workshop-positive discipline with Melinda Olds, 7 p.m. Drop in time, use playroom and outdoor play area, clothingexchange and lending library, 10 a.m. - 12 noon.
May 23 - Trip to Gould Farm, Monterey to see baby animals. Wear boots, bring a picnic. Meet at Red Barn at 10 a.m. Call 528-0721 for directions. Baby and me exercise class, 11 a.m. Drop in-use playroom and outdoor play area, clothing exchange and lending library, 3-5 p.m.
May 30 - Baby and me exercise, 11 a.m. Drop in - use playroom and outdoor play area, clothing exchange and lending library, 3-5 p.m . Picnic for families with multiple births, bring a salad or dessert, 5-7 p.m. Call 528-0721 for more information.
May 31 - Stand for children day, many activities sponsored by Children's Health Program at Russell House, 54 Castle Street, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information call 528-9311.

GREETING FROM JOAN

Joan Reed writes that she has a new right hip, to which she is adjusting nicely: "Perhaps the headline should read (she writes) : WELL KNOWN GIRL ENTERS HOSPITAL FOR NEW HIP! ... Good food, nice nurses.. After the operation I could push a button and release pain-killer. I never had one hour of pain!... " On the new hip: "It was tough at first! but I got the hang of it! ... All the calls, cards, prayers, visitors at the hospital... THANK YOU! THANK YOU!THANK YOU!""

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THE OBSERVER - MARCH

The winter now fading got serious before and after the actual calendar limits of the season. In late fall and again in early spring there were storms that left deep snow, but there was little snow all winter otherwise. The heavy stuff in April brought down lots of tree limbs, and many in the region were powerless for days, although Monterey was spared. Next month we will have the statistical summary of the season.

High temp (3/28)	64.4°
Low temp. (3/9)	3.56°
Avg. high temp.	39.6°
Avg. low temp.	21.7°
Avg. temp.	30.7°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	32.2°
Precip. occ.	17 days
Rainfall	2.65"
Snowfall	23"
Total precip.	5.77"
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	3.31"
High bar. press. (3/9)	30.48"
Low bar. press. (3/6)	29.15"
High wind gust (3/6)	47 mph

GRANGE NEWS

The April meeting started with the covered dish supper for members and friends. The meeting followed, with a program chaired by Eleanor Kimberly of the Agriculture and Conservation Committee. An informational talk on the dairy farmers' hardships due to milk prices was done, followed by readings. The next meeting will be May 21. Deputy Robert Peck will make an official visit.

Mary Wallace

PO BOX 9, 01245

Dear Editor:

Monterey has in Fred Chapman a uniquely trained Planning Board member. This is an exceptional opportunity for any community and we are lucky to have Fred here in Monterey.

Having been a member of the Planning Board this past year, I would like to convey to the community the contribution Fred Chapman is making. Perhaps most important, Fred is absolutely even-handed in his decisions. He approaches them with attention and knowledge of the particular project, supported with knowledge he can draw on from his previous professional involvement. The requirements of our laws do not always make these popular positions, but it is these Bylaws which insure that Monterey retains the environment we have established and which we all value.

Sincerely,
Gerry Shapiro

LIGHT AND COLOR

There will be a series of talks given at the Monterey Church Basement on Learning to Live with Light and Color, by optomotrist Earl Lizotte. Participants will discuss the therory and practice of light and color therapy, including environmental lighting, a specialty which Dr. Lizotte is but one of three people in the country certified to teach at this time.

The first talk will be held on May 17, from 10 a.m. to noon.

David Fineberg

CALENDAR

Sundays, AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Sunday, May 25. The Bidwell House hosts the Second Annual Great Berkshire Bean Planting Day,1-4 p.m., free, call 528-6888.

Tuesday, May 20. Free blood pressure clinic, 9–10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange (town offices), Main Road.

Wednesday, May 21. Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

Wednesday, May 21. Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

Friday, May 9. Owl Prowl: Learn the habits of the kinds of owls found in this area. 9-10 p.m., The Bidwell House, call 528-6888.

Friday, May 16. Gould Farm Choral Concert at the Main House at the farm. Free. All are invited.

Saturday, May 17. Lecture on Learning to Live with Light and Color, 10 a.m. church basement, donat ion requested. (see article below).

Saturday, May 24, Square and Contradance Party at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, 8–12 p.m. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Adults $5, children $2. For info, 413-528-9385/ 518-329-7578.

Monday, May 26. Memorial Day/ 150th Celebration Parade, 2 p.m. Parade route starts at Sandisfield Road intersection and ends at the firehouse. Post-parade events are at the firehouse.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Mo Banner, p.7, Bonner McAllester, p.14.

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